

Message Text

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ACTION EA-06

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DOD PRIORITY

JCS PRIORITY

CINCPAC

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

S E C R E T MANILA 6987

LIMDIS

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

CANBERRA FOR HABIB

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MARR RP

SUBJ: MAY 21 MEETING WITH MARCOS: BASES, SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

1. I HAD TWO HOUR MEETING ALONE WITH PRESIDENT MARCOS
MAY 21, IN WHICH WE DISCUSSED SEVERAL TOPICS WHICH WILL BE
REPORTED BY SEPARATE CABLES. MAIN BURDEN OF CONVERSATION
CONCERNED US-RP SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS AND MILITARY BASES.
OUR DISCUSSION THIS SUBJECT WAS INCONCLUSIVE AND GENERALLY
CONTAINED NO SURPRISES.

2. MARCOS OPENED BY SAYING THAT EVENTS AND POPULAR
SENTIMENT, BOTH IN PHILIPPINES AND ELSEWHERE, WERE CAUSING
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HIM TO BELIEVE THAT MILITARY BASES OF AN "EXTRATERRITORIAL"

NATURE REQUIRED RE-EXAMINATION. HE SAID HE VALUED PHILIPPINE ALLIANCE WITH U.S. AND, IN HIS OWN PREFERENCE, WOULD LIKE TO SEE IT STRENGTHENED RATHER THAN WEAKENED. THAT IS WHY HE HAD CALLED FOR "NATO-TYPE" GUARANTEE RATHER THAN LOOSER LANGUAGE OF US-RP BILATERAL.

3. HE ALSO FELT HIS ASEAN NEIGHBORS (EXCEPT, HE WINCED, FOR ADAM MALIK) PLACED GREAT VALUE ON A CONTINUED U.S. PRESENCE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA EVEN IF THEY HESITATED TO SAY SO OPENLY. THEREFORE, HE CONCLUDED, THE PROBLEM SEEMED TO BE HOW TO KEEP THE U.S. SEVENTH FLEET AND OTHER U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE AVAILABLE IN SOUTHEAST ASIA DESPITE WHAT HE REGARDED AS IRREVERSIBLE ASIAN PUBLIC OBJECTION TO FOREIGN MILITARY BASES PER SE.

4. HE SAID HE THOUGHT THERE WERE SEVERAL WAYS WE COULD APPROACH THE PROBLEM. HE REFERRED TO THE TALKING PAPERS ALEX MELCHOR HAD DISCUSSED WITH ME AND WITH ADMIRAL SHELTON ABOUT A "SINGAPORE-TYPE" ARRANGEMENT FOR SUBIC, AND ASKED WHAT I THOUGHT OF THAT. HE SAID OTHER DISCUSSIONS HAD TAKEN PLACE IN GOP ABOUT "CIVILIANIZING" CLARK AIR BASE. HE WONDERED WHAT MY REACTIONS WERE TO SUCH IDEAS.

5. I SAID THAT WE OBVIOUSLY REGARDED THE SECURITY AGREEMENT AND THE MILITARY BASES AS TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN. IF THE GOP DECIDED IT NO LONGER WANTED OUR SECURITY COMMITMENT, I DOUBTED WE COULD REALISTICALLY EXPECT TO HOLD ON TO OUR BASES GUANTANAMO-STYLE. IF, ON THE OTHER HAND, GOP DECIDED THEY NO LONGER WANTED OUR BASES, I DOUBTED WE COULD REALISTICALLY EXPECT TO BE ABLE TO FULFILL A SECURITY COMMITMENT TO THE PHILIPPINES.

6. AS FOR THE FUTURE MILITARY POSTURE OF THE U.S. IN SOUTHEAST ASIA, MUCH WOULD OBVIOUSLY DEPEND ON OUR ASSESSMENT OF THE NEW SITUATION EMERGING FROM THE COLLAPSE OF INDOCHINA. I DOUBTED WE COULD GIVE A MATURE AND BALANCED VIEW UNTIL THE DUST SETTLED IN INDOCHINA AND WE UNDERSTOOD A LITTLE MORE ABOUT THE VARIOUS INTERPLAYS OF POWER THERE, ESPECIALLY THE SINO-SOVIET EQUATION. (THERE ENSUED AT THIS POINT A FAIRLY LENGTHY EXCHANGE ON RECENT EVENTS AND
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PROSPECTS IN INDOCHINA.)

7. I THEN TURNED TO THE PAPERS MELCHOR HAD DISCUSSED WITH US ON SUBIC. I EXPLAINED HOW COMPLEX THE SUBIC FACILITY WAS AND ASKED IF THE PRESIDENT HAD EVER HAD A GOOD BRIEFING ON THE INSTALLATION. MARCOS SAID HE HAD ALWAYS AVOIDED KNOWING TOO MUCH ABOUT THE MILITARY BASES BECAUSE THEY WERE A RATHER TRICKY POLITICAL ISSUE PRIOR TO MARTIAL LAW.

I ASKED IF HE WOULD LIKE A BRIEFING AND A VISIT TO SUBIC.
HE SAID HE WOULD WELCOME ONE, AND WOULD LIKE TO VISIT CLARK
AS WELL. WE TENTATIVELY AGREED TO SCHEDULE SUCH VISITS
AFTER HIS RETURN FROM CHINA AND BEFORE THE HEAVY RAINS
BEGIN, PROBABLY IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN JUNE 12 AND JUNE 20.

8. MARCOS SAID HE THOUGHT SUCH VISITS WOULD HELP HIM GET
A BETTER PERSPECTIVE ON THE VARIOUS STUDIES HIS PEOPLE WERE
PREPARING. IN THE MEANTIME, HE SAID HE WOULD INSTRUCT THEM
TO CONTINUE TO EXAMINE AND STUDY THE SUBJECT. HE ASKED
WHETHER WE WOULD BE WILLING TO DO SOME PARALLEL STUDIES
ON THE U.S. SIDE. I SAID I WOULD BE WILLING TO RECOMMEND
THAT SUCH STUDIES BE MADE AND REMINDED HIM THAT ADMIRAL
GAYLER WOULD BE HERE ON THE WEEKEND. MARCOS SAID HE WOULD
DISCUSS SUBJECT WITH GAYLER.

9. TURNING TO SUBJECT OF A "STRENGTHENED" U.S. SECURITY
GUARANTEE, I SAID THAT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE NATO
TREATY AND THE US-RP TREATY WAS ESSENTIALLY SEMANTIC,
SINCE IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, A SECURITY COMMITMENT DEPENDED
ON OUR CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESSES, WHICH MEANT CONGRESSIONAL
APPROVAL. I SAID THAT THE MOOD OF CONGRESS WAS IMPORTANT
TO BEAR IN MIND. FOR EXAMPLE, CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES
TOWARDS KOREA WERE COLORED BY PARK'S POLITICAL BEHAVIOR
AND BY THE GULF OIL BRIBE. CONGRESSIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARDS
THE PHILIPPINES WERE ESSENTIALLY POSITIVE, BUT THE AQUINO,
LOPEZ AND OSMENA CASES WERE A PROBLEM. THERE WERE MANY
WAYS IN WHICH WE COULD SEEK STRONGER CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT,
BUT I THOUGHT IT IMPRUDENT TO ATTEMPT IT UNTIL HE CLEANED
UP THE POLITICAL PRISONER CASES. MARCOS ACCEPTED THESE
OBSERVATIONS AND THERE ENSUED A LENGTHY DISCUSSION ON
AQUINO, ET ALS, WHICH WILL BE REPORTED SEPARATELY.

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10. COMMENT: IT APPEARS MARCOS DOES NOT RPT NOT WISH TO
FORCE THE PACE OF DISCUSSION ON U.S. MILITARY BASES UNTIL
HE TAKES HIS TRIP TO CHINA AND MEETS HIS ASEAN COLLEAGUES
IN SUMMIT ASSEMBLED. IN MEANTIME, BY PRESSING FOR
"STUDIES" HE WILL TRY TO KEEP THE SUBJECT SIMMERING OVER
A VERY LOW FLAME.
SULLIVAN

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